

FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus to Showcase Latin American Cinema in Free Film Program at The Garfield Theatre

The Curated Program Will Explore How Films Shape Our Understanding of Foreign Cultures as Part of the *Telephotography* FotoFocus Symposium

Sunday, April 10, 2022



Poster for Paula Markovitch's *El actor principal* [The Leading Actor] (2019)

(CINCINNATI, OH — MARCH 22, 2022) — **FotoFocus** is pleased to announce the schedule for the 2022 FotoFocus Symposium Film Program, which will take place at The Garfield Theatre (719 Race St, Cincinnati) on **Sunday, April 10, 2022**. The free, public program curated by **Havana Film Festival New York Artistic Director Diana Vargas** will showcase the diversity of Latin American cultures to North American audiences, while examining the ways media creates and distorts our understanding of foreign cultures. The afternoon of film screenings and conversation directly follows the FotoFocus Symposium's previous day of talks at Memorial Hall.

In line with the 2022 FotoFocus Symposium theme of *Telephotography*, the afternoon will begin with screenings of short films from Brazil, Peru, Spain and Venezuela that ask viewers to question the many ways cultures connect with and affect each other over long distances. An ensuing panel discussion, moderated by Vargas, will explore how films, photographs, and subtitles alter our perception of other cultures, for better or for worse.

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The day will conclude with a screening of the feature film *El actor principal* [The Leading Actor] (2019) by Argentine, Mexico-based film director and screenwriter Paula Markovitch. The film is Markovitch's direct commentary on how larger European film festivals often favor films that portray Latin Americans in poverty or misery.

"We are now part of a multidimensional and international audience that is less interested in distinguishing narrative forms of storytelling than they are in consuming the stories themselves—be it via an online streaming platform, by attending a film festival, or with a bag of popcorn at a commercial theater," said Diana Vargas, Artistic Director of the Havana Film Festival New York. "Are the viewers in the U.S. broadening their perspectives or, on the contrary, making the countries in which those movies are produced more exotic and distant? That's the dialog I wanted to create with the films and guests in this program."

Films in Spanish and Portuguese will be screened with English subtitles. The FotoFocus Symposium and Film Program are free and open to the public. The Garfield Theatre has limited capacity based on Covid policies, so seating is first come first serve. Proof of vaccination is required.

For the latest information, visit the [FotoFocus website](#).

SCHEDULE

2–2:45pm Short Films Program by CortoCircuito NY (45 minutes)

¿SIGUES AHÍ? [Are You There?] (2020)

Directed by Mónica Zamora

Are we really connected? This short film questions the effects of hyper-connectivity, revealing how the world of the internet both unites and separates us. The film is shot through a screen and with the shot-sequence technique. (12 min | Spain | Fiction)

Isadora's Karaoke (2020)

Directed by Thiago Mendonça

Alone in the quarantine, Isadora, the director's daughter, sings. (6 min | Brazil, Portugal | Experimental)

MUJERES [Women] (2021)

Directed by Fátima Lizardo

A metaphorical collage, *MUJERES* questions the various representations of women in film and the roles of female directors and actresses who participate in perpetuating the stereotypes. (5 min | Spain | Documentary)

Transformarte [Transform You] (2021)

Directed by Jimmy Valdivieso

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In downtown Lima, Peru, a documentary filmmaker faces his own demons, plagued by the realization of how romantic preconceptions of cultures conflict with intentions to record hard social realities in an effort to save the world. (9 min | Peru | Documentary)

Fever (2019)

Directed by Rafael Romero Peña

Fever is an inner dialogue between two extremes: the idea of the “exotic” and its representation through the “visual.” Inspired by the claustrophobic atmosphere of Hong Kong, where extreme living conditions, overpopulation, and the crisis of post-colonial identity are held in contrast against the image of a modern capitalist paradise. (7 min | Spain, China, Netherlands | Fiction, Experimental)

Lesson #6 (2018)

Directed by Alberto Ferreras

"Did you see who won best actress last night? Did you see what she was wearing?" A catty comment backstage at a drag bar triggers an unexpected and inspired rant. With Barbra Herr and Giovanka de Medicis. (4 min | USA, Venezuela, Spain | Fiction)

3–4pm

Film Panel: *Watching Movies with Subtitles*

Moderated by **Diana Vargas**, Artistic Director of the Havana Film Festival New York, New York, NY, with panelists: **Sandro Fiorin**, Founder of FiGa Films, Miami, FL, and **Rafael Romero Peña**, Multidisciplinary Artist and Director of *Fever* (2019), Rotterdam, Netherlands

How does media—and photographic imagery in particular—create and distort understanding of foreign cultures? Between reality, perception, and appearance, where does the viewer in the United States construct his or her truth about Latinos and foreign countries? Between physical reality, hyper-connectivity, over-information, where is the center?

4–5:15pm

Feature Film: *El actor principal* [The Leading Actor] (2019)

Directed by Paula Markovitch

While actors Hugh Jackman and Patrick Stewart paraded on the red carpet of the 2017 Berlinale, director Paula Markovitch, with three hidden cameras and no permissions, filmed on the same carpet a fight scene for her movie *El actor principal* [The Leading Actor]. This film reflects on the view that Europeans have about creators from developing countries. (74 min | Mexico | Fiction)

5:30pm

Reception

See the complete [2022 FotoFocus Symposium Schedule and Participants](#).

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ABOUT FOTOFOCUS

FotoFocus is a Cincinnati-based nonprofit arts organization that champions photography and lens-based art through exhibitions and public programming. Since 2010, the organization has engaged art and educational institutions throughout the region to support and expand the cultural dialogue around the medium that has come to define our time. With an emphasis on intellectually and academically rigorous programs, the organization provides uniquely enriching access to lens-based art, film, and practices inspired by photography. FotoFocus has collaborated with organizations, curators, academics, and more than 1600 artists and participants, to present over 750 exhibitions and programs.

FotoFocus has awarded close to 600 grants to support partners presenting projects and educational programs that are accessible and engaging to the public. In April 2020, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, FotoFocus pledged part of its 2020 Biennial budget to financially support more than 100 Participating Venues and Partners in the region's art community through FotoFocus Emergency Art Grants.

Signature FotoFocus programming includes the **FotoFocus Biennial**, **FotoFocus Symposium**, **FotoFocus Talks Series**, and **Film and Video** programming. Past Biennial editions have presented work across the Cincinnati region by historic and contemporary artists including Berenice Abbott, Eugène Atget, Roe Ethridge, Zanele Muholi, Karl Blossfeldt, Francis Bruguière, Thomas Ruff, and Akram Zaatar. Other landmark events include the **Symposium**, which has contributed significant dialogue and insight to culturally relevant topics including the controversial Mapplethorpe exhibition, and the **Talks Series**, which has brought globally renowned artists like Zoe Leonard and William Wegman to Cincinnati.

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